

## Message Text

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15

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07

INT-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-03 SAM-01 OES-03

SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 FRB-03 PA-01 USIA-06

PRS-01 EUR-12 /104 W

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R 111505Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8071

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 4905

THE FOLLOWING TELEGRAM WAS SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO CALCUTTA/  
MADRAS FM BOMBAY 11 APR 75 REPEATED TO YOU

QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG IN

SUBJ: PM INAUGURATES TRIAL PRODUCTION OF CRUDE BY SAGAR SAMRAT

REF BOMBAY 0848

1. IN ONGC-STAGED PRODUCTION ACCOMPANIED BY CONSIDERABLE FANFARE,  
PM GANDHI INAUGURATED TRIAL PRODUCTION OF CRUDE FROM FOURTH  
WELL IN BOMBAY HIGH AND OPENED VALVE RELEASING CRUDE INTO  
500-TON TANKER BROUGHT TO THE RIG FOR THE OCCASION. PM REPORTEDLY  
CALLED INAUGURATION NOT ONLY "AN EXCITING MOMENT BUT ONE ESSENTIAL  
FOR COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC SELF SUFFICIENCY", ADDING THAT NOTHING WAS  
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MORE IMPORTANT THAN THAT INDIA SHOULD BE "TRULY INDEPENDENT".

2. PM'S VISIT TO THE RIG IS GIVEN WIDE COVERAGE IN LOCAL PRESS WITH MOST PAPERS FOLLOWING INDIAN EXPRESS IN PROCLAIMING THAT A "NEW OIL ERA BEGINS". THE SHOW WAS ALMOST ENTIRELY INDIAN, WITH OFFSHORE INTERNATIONAL ONLY MENTIONED IN PASSING IN WHAT WAS OBVIOUSLY AN ONGC HANDOUT TO THE PRESS.

3. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS MINISTER K.D. MALAVIYA, SPEAKING ABOARD THE RIG, THANKED THE SOVIET UNION FOR ITS HELP AND SAID THAT MUCH OF WHAT INDIA HAS ACHIEVED IN OIL EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION "HAS BEEN POSSIBLE ONLY BECAUSE OF THIS GENEROUS FRATERNAL ASSISTANCE". MALAVIYA ALSO CONGRATULATED THE PM FOR HER VISION AND FARSIGHTEDNESS WHICH HAD KEPT "THIS BIG OIL ZONE OF INDIA ENTIRELY UNDER THE PEOPLES' CONTROL".

4. EVEN MORE TO THE POINT, THE MINISTER APPARENTLY AVOIDED ANY REFERENCE TO OFFSHORE INTERNATIONAL OR TO THE U.S. ROLE IN THE BOMBAY HIGH. MALAVIYA IS QUOTED AT ONE POINT AS SAYING THAT THE SAGAR SAMRAT IS UNDER COMPLETE ONGC CONTROL AND THAT "IT IS ONLY TO THE EXTENT NECESSARY THAT ASSISTANCE FOR DRILLING OPERATIONS AND A FEW OTHER TECHNICAL SERVICES WERE BEING HIRED FROM EXPATRIATE COMPANIES". HE DID ADMIT THAT ONGC "TOOK THE HELP OF SPECIALIST FIRMS", WITHOUT IDENTIFYING THE FIRM OR ITS ORIGIN. BY CONTRAST, HE INDICATED THAT INDIA HAS HIRED A SEMI-SUBMERSIBLE DRILLING PLATFORM "FROM A NORWEGIAN COMPANY WITH OPTION TO BUY", AND HAS APPROVED A CONTRACT TO BUY A BRITISH DRILLING RIG.

5. WE HAD HOPED TO OBTAIN A FEW MORE DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAM FROM L.T. GARRETT, BUT HE HAS BEEN TIED UP ALL WEEK ON PLANNING AND PREPARATION FOR THE VISIT. THE PRESS REPORTS TODAY THAT Y.B. CHAVAN WILL VISIT THE RIG SATURDAY, APRIL 12, SO GARRETT WILL PROBABLY BE BUSY WITH THAT VISIT. IN ANY CASE, WE WILL TRY TO SEE HIM EARLY IN THE COMING WEEK AND WILL REPORT ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION HE MIGHT HAVE ON THE PM'S VISIT, AS WELL AS ANY OTHER INFORMATION HE MIGHT GIVE US ON EXPLORATION IN GENERAL.

BANE  
UNQUOTE.  
SAXBE

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PETROLEUM, PETROLEUM PRODUCTION  
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**Draft Date:** 11 APR 1975  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**To:** STATE  
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